

REMARKS:

A telephone interview was held with the Examiner and the Examiner's supervisor on July 22, 2008, and the prior art, including the Voogd Patent was discussed. Proposed amendments to the Claims to include the tunnel and various features of the tunnel were discussed and it was thought that Claims with those revisions might well be patentable and were not disclosed in the prior art uncovered thus far.

In paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Office Action dated April 3, 2008, drawing objections were made. The Applicant has answered those objections by making amendments to the Disclosure. It is not necessary to amend the drawings in view of the amendments to the Disclosure, and the Applicant requests that the drawing objections be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected various Claims based on anticipation and obviousness because of Voogd et al. as set out in paragraphs 3 to 14 of the Office Action. The Examiner rejected Claims 19 and 26 as being unpatentable over Voogd et al. in view of Hayes, and rejected Claims 22, 27, 28 and 32 as being unpatentable over Voogd et al. in view of Pate et al. The Applicant has amended Claims 1 to 29 to include the tunnel and details thereof. The Voogd Patent is directed to feeding animals, where the feed is dispensed into a feed trough for a particular animal. If that animal consumes less than the feed in the trough, that feed is left over for a subsequent animal that has access to the trough. With the system described in Voogd, it is, of course, preferred that the animal devour all of the feed in the trough that is dispensed for that animal. When a different animal approaches the trough, the trough is preferably empty, and more feed is dispensed into the trough for the different animal.

With the present invention, the feed is placed in one or more containers at a feeding station. A particular animal is given access to the feeding station and is given access to one or more feed sources that contain more feed than the animal will be allowed to consume. When the animal consumes an appropriate amount of feed, the method and system of the present invention prevent further access by the animal to the feed source. In view of the amendments made to Claims 1 to 29, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of those Claims be withdrawn.

With respect to Claims 30 to 35, the amendments to these Claims were not discussed during the telephone interview. Claim 30 has been amended to provide that the system has a sensor to

determine at least one of first approaches and first tastes of each feed source by each animal. The method and system of the present invention are directed to the feeding of animals, but are particularly suitable for the feeding of cats and/or dogs. The monitoring of first approaches and first tastes is not described in any of the prior art cited by the Examiner and it is respectfully submitted that this feature is not rendered obvious by the prior art. A manufacturer of feed for animals can use the system described in Claims 30 to 35 to determine the preference of the animals for a particular feed and, with appropriate usage, can determine the preference by the animals for a particular ingredient in the feed. A feed manufacturer can also use the system to determine the nutritional value of particular feed sources by monitoring those animals that consume those feed sources. Similarly, if a pet owner is considering changing from one feed source to another, the pet owner can obtain small samples of alternative feed sources, and use the system claimed in Claims 30 to 35 to determine which new feed source the animal or animals particularly prefer.

In view of the revisions made to the Claims, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of the Claims be withdrawn, and that all of the Claims, including Claims 30 to 35, are in condition for allowance.

The Applicant requests a one month extension of time to respond, and will pay the fee for a one month extension of time in the amount of \$60.00, upon the filing of this response. The Applicant is a small entity.

Yours very truly,



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